

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH  
PSYCHIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH NURSE PRACTITIONER (PMHNP)  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS-2009**

***1. Can you explain the three kinds of nurses that participate in the PMHNP Development Program?***

**Certified PMHNP**

- is a DMH RN that has completed a BRN approved PMHNP program at a university.
- has a furnishing number and a DEA number.
- provides advanced practice nursing care to DMH clients, including (but not limited to) psychotherapy and furnishing psychotropic medications, adhering to the DMH PMHNP Protocols and the DMH Parameters for Use of Psychotropic Medications.
- Receives clinical supervision from the psychiatrist(s).
- Uses billing code 90806 for psychotherapy, 90862 for Individual Medication Services and M0064 for a Brief Medication Visit.
- may assist in the development of additional PMHNPs in the DMH.

**Certified PMHNP that is obtaining psychiatrist –supervised furnishing hours**

- is a Registered Nurse that has completed a BRN approved PMHNP program at a university.
- needs 520 hours of furnishing psychotropic medications under the supervision of one or more psychiatrists.
- provides advanced practice nursing care to DMH clients, including (but not limited to) psychotherapy and furnishing psychotropic medications under the close supervision of a psychiatrist, adhering to the DMH PMHNP Protocols and the DMH Parameters for Use of Psychotropic Medications.
- Uses billing codes 90806 (psychotherapy) and H2010 (Med support.)

**Graduate student in a PMHNP program**

- is a DMH RN that is enrolled in a BRN approved PMHNP program at a university. (May or may not be a DMH employee.)
- is learning the competencies required to provide advanced practice nursing care to DMH clients.
- May be precepted by any or all of the following: PMHNP, Psychiatrist, Psychologist (therapy), Social Worker (social issues).
- does not furnish any medications to DMH clients.
- Uses billing codes 90806 (psychotherapy) and H2010 (Med Support)

**2. *Where can I find the DMH PMHNP Standardized Procedures?***

There is a PMHNP Manual in each clinic that has a certified PMHNP. The Manual contains the following documents that together comprise the DMH Standardized Procedures: The PMHNP Protocol, the DMH Parameters for the Use of Psychoactive Medications, and a Signature Page. The Signature Page must be signed by the PMHNP, the psychiatrist(s) that supervise the PMHNP, and the Clinic Manager. The PMHNP cannot furnish medications to DMH clients until all of the required signatures are in place. The Protocol and the Parameters can also be found on the DMH website.

**3. *Have all of the DMH PMHNP positions been filled?***

There are four vacant PMHNP positions - two at West Central MHC and two at Augustus Hawkins MHC. The other PMHNP positions have been filled by certified PMHNPs and by DMH RNs that are enrolled in local university PMHNP certification programs.

**4. *Were all of the positions filled with RNs that were working for the DMH?***

No. As time went by, there were not enough DMH RNs that were interested in participating in the DMH PMHNP Development Program. Therefore, we advertised on local nursing organization websites. Because of the advertising, we were able to attract some nurses that were already certified as PMHNPs, and some nurses that needed to complete PMHNP certification programs at local universities.

**5. *Why are all of the PMHNP positions in either Wellness Centers or FCCS Programs?***

The MHSA funds only new and innovative programs. Wellness Centers and FCCS programs are new and innovative, and are thus funded by the MHSA. DMH nurses wishing to participate in the DMH PMHNP Development Program need to transfer to a clinic that has a vacant PMHNP item.

**6. *Once all of the PMHNP positions are filled, will the DMH still support its nurses in returning to school to become certified PMHNPs?***

Originally, we needed to fill all vacant PMHNP items. Once these are filled, the DMH will continue to provide paid time off of work for school (4 hours a week) and tuition reimbursement when available. There will always be a need to fill positions that become vacant by attrition, retirement, etc.

**7. *How can I participate in the DMH PMHNP Development Program?***

Interested nurses should contact Suzane Wilbur or Eydie Dominguez. They will assist you to apply at the local university of your choice – CSULB, CSULA, or Azusa Pacific University. Call the Nursing Department of the university. Ask for an advisement appointment. You will be asked to have your transcripts sent in order to determine the courses that you need to take in order to become a certified PMHNP.

**FOR ASSISTANCE IN CONTACTING LOCAL UNIVERSITIES, OR FOR ANSWERS TO ANY OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DMH PMHNP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, PLEASE CONTACT:**

Suzane Wilbur – [swilbur@dmh.lacounty.gov](mailto:swilbur@dmh.lacounty.gov) – 213-305-3752 or  
Eydie Dominguez – [edominguez@dmh.lacounty.gov](mailto:edominguez@dmh.lacounty.gov) – 213-738-4472